

12.9.21 pm Dr. Antony Latham Testimony

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Date: 12 September 2021

Preacher: Dr Antony Latham

[0 : 00] Good evening, a warm welcome to the service this evening, those who are in the building and also those who are watching online. It's good for us to come together again and to worship God.

We're going to begin this time of worship by singing to God's praise from Psalm 40. Psalm 40 and the first two stanzas, I think, of the psalm, maybe the first three.

Is it the first two or the first three? The first three stanzas of the psalm in Gaelic. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear at length to me. He did incline my voice and cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay. And on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way. He put a new song in my mouth, our God to magnify.

Many shall see it and shall fear and on the Lord rely. These three stanzas are familiar words from Psalm 40. We remain seated to sing in Gaelic.

[1 : 01] We sing to God's praise. Let's go. We sing to God.

Right? Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[3 : 43] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[7 : 51] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Cela me Importing would live by the Looking front, the rest, the earth Forming in the Next art

Good Through Garden taron i th th tickets expensive so is brunch what's inside the passion fresh autumnidday

Okay Oh so Thank you.

[13 : 02] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[15 : 27] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. now to God's praise from Psalm 40. We sang to the end of verse 3 and I think we're singing now from verses 4 through to verse 7. Verse 3, verse 4 to 7. We sang 1 to 3, haven't we?

I don't have the order of service in front of me tonight, so it's 3 to 7. So we're singing verses 3 to 7 now. Psalm 40 verses 3 to 7. He put a new song in my mouth, our God to magnify.

Many shall see it and shall fear, and on the Lord rely. Down to the end of verse 7. We'll stand to sing to God's praise. He put a new song in my mouth, our God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear, and on the Lord rely. O blessed is the man whose trust upon the Lord relies. Respecting not the proud

Lord nor such as turn aside to light. O Lord my God, who many are, the wonders thou hast done, thy gracious thoughts to us were far. Above all thoughts are gone. In order none can reckon

condemn. To thee if they fail. And speak of them, I would pay more than can be number. No sacrifice, not offering. No sacrifice, nor offering. Is thou at all desire. My ears are born, sin of ringer. And burnt is not required.

And to the Lord these were my words. I come behold the sea. Within the volume of the book. It's written in, the Lord bless. Amen.

[19 : 36] Just going to hand over to Anthony in a second. But before I do, just a question or two to the boys and girls. I said this morning that Anthony, Dr. Latham, was going to be coming up and he was going to be sharing his testimony.

Now, we don't often hear the word testimony just when we're in school or when we're out in the shop or when we're doing our normal stuff. So, what do you think it means when somebody's given their testimony?

John, your hand was first up. When somebody's telling how they became a Christian? Yeah. When somebody's telling how they became a Christian. To give a testimony is to tell the truth.

And when we're giving our testimony in church, we're telling the people who are listening. And here and those who might be listening far away.

about how we became a Christian. How we came to faith in Jesus. That's our testimony. And so, the psalm that we were just singing, it was like David's testimony.

[20 : 49] He wrote all these different psalms. But this is a favorite psalm of so many people. because it's David's testimony. And he says, I waited for the Lord my God.

Which means he trusted God. And then he talks about when he trusted God, when he believed in God, God is the one who took him from the fearful pit.

That's a picture of sin. And put his feet on a rock, which is a picture of Jesus. And so, in that psalm that we so often sing, David's giving us testimony of how he came to believe.

And those who believe, we've all got different testimonies. We all believe in the same Lord Jesus. We are all able to say that we know that our sins have been forgiven through him.

We're all looking to the same cross. We're all saved the same way. And that Jesus, his blood is what saves us. But how that happens, it varies from person to person.

[21 : 55] And yet we're all called to give our testimony. For Christians. We're not to be secret believers, as we heard this morning. We're to give our testimony. And one way we can do that is by standing up here, as Anthony's about to, and to tell a story.

And another way we can do that is with no words. Boys and girls, can you think, is there a way that we can give our testimony and say that we believe in Jesus, even without any words?

Can you think about that? Is there a place that we can go to? Is there a thing that we can do where we're saying, I am a Christian. I believe in Jesus. I'm trusting in him.

And I want you all to see it. And yet we don't even have to use words. Lois? The Bible, that's where we go to, to hear God speak.

But is there a place that we can go to say, I am a Christian. I'm trusting in Jesus. Emily? The Lord's table. That's right.

[23 : 06] That's right. So next Sunday, for those who are Christians, for those who have had their sins washed away by Jesus, we don't sit hiding in some corner of the church.

But we come forward to the Lord's table. And we sit there and as we take the bread, we remember Jesus' body broken for us. And as we take the wine or the grape juice, we remember Jesus' blood shed for us.

And when we take it, we're saying, I believe. Jesus is my Savior. He's my Lord. And this is my testimony.

So sometimes we can give our testimony without even saying any words. Some of us are very shy. And God in his kindness has said to us, there's a way that you can say you believe in me without even having to stand up and say words.

Come to the table. So let me say that to anybody who might be here who believes and hasn't yet shared your testimony. Come and speak to me and come forward to the table.

[24 : 28] It's for those who know they are sinners and it's for those who know that Christ Jesus is their Savior. And as we step forward, we give a testimony that our faith is in him.

So Anthony's going to share his testimony in just a second. I'm going to pray before he does so. I'm going to ask you also for prayer for a couple of things. Some of you will remember a man called Mark Hynde from Open Doors who spoke to us recently on Zoom about India.

He spoke to us in the prayer meeting room there a couple of years back as well about various places where God's people are persecuted. And he got COVID a few days ago but he got very ill with it.

And so we've heard from various people that he's struggling a lot just now. He's in hospital. He's kind of drifting in and out of consciousness. There's an update that Ian's put on the Facebook page. He's drifting in and out of consciousness. He's seriously ill. His wife also is very ill with it. And so a request has gone out that we pray for him.

[25 : 44] And so let's be remembering to pray for Mark and his wife. Mary, can you remember her name? Is it Joyce? Sharon. Mark and Sharon at this time.

And also maybe if you could pray for Mary's brother Neil or Neil Lachey as he's known. Just before church this morning he was feeling slightly funny and when he went into church the elders noticed his face had kind of fallen slightly to one side.

So he took the service but they phoned for help afterwards. So when we left he was with a doctor's paramedics and they were just trying to decide what to do next.

It looks potentially like Bell's palsy but we don't know for sure. So the family would appreciate prayer for Neil Lachey as well. So let's pray for a moment.

Our Heavenly Father we thank you that you are our Father. We thank you that Jesus is the one who calls us to trust him as Saviour. We thank you that we can say with the psalmist that you are our Lord.

[27 : 00] That you are our God when we are trusting in you. And we pray for faith each of us that we would be trusting in Jesus. That we wouldn't just hear the message of the Gospel.

That we wouldn't just hear the call of Jesus and stay back distant. But we pray that each one of us young and old would ask Jesus to take our sin away to be our Saviour to be our Lord.

We thank you for this gift of prayer. We thank you that we are able to come to you as our Father. we thank you that we are able to carry people through prayer to the feet of Jesus.

We thank you that we have the help of the Holy Spirit. And we pray for those who are struggling in a particular way just now. We think of Mark and his wife Sharon and the family.

And we pray for them just now. We know that Mark is drifting in and out of consciousness and people are struggling to be able to communicate with him. But we thank you that you are the God who is able to reach us when others can't.

[28 : 07] So we pray for him that he and Sharon would know your presence and your peace. We pray Lord Jesus that you would lay your healing hand upon him if that be your will.

And we ask that as we carry him to you in prayer that he would know that touch of Christ upon him even now. We thank you for the encouragement he has been to us in the past and we pray that you would minister to him powerfully at this time.

And we pray for Mary's brother Neil as well. We ask that as they await what is to come next that you would give those who are attending to him wisdom.

We pray that you would steady and that you would give strength to CJ and the rest of the family as they wait with anxiety wondering what comes next.

We pray that he would get the care that he needs quickly and that he would know your hand of healing upon him also. We thank you that we can bring those that we love to you in prayer and we thank you that you are the God who hears and who answers our prayer.

[29 : 22] and we pray now for Anthony and we thank you for his willingness to open your word and to share with us from your word and to share with us something of what you have done and are doing in his life.

We thank you that you are a personal God who meets with us as individuals who seeks us who saves us and who calls us to walk close with him and so help Anthony we pray as he comes now minister to him in the power of the Holy Spirit minister through him in the power of the Holy Spirit and may we each of us look to Christ this evening and be drawn to the one that Anthony will point us to.

So hear our prayers take away our sin and go before us now in Jesus name we ask. Amen. Thank you Anthony. I'll hand over and I'll sit comfortably for the rest of the service.

Let's open our Bibles. I'm going to read from Ephesians chapter 2. Ephesians chapter 2 beginning first verse. I've chosen this because it's very relevant as you'll find out to the story that I'm going to give about what God has been doing in my life.

So let's just have a look at that together. Ephesians chapter 2 and we're going to read verses 1 to 10. And you were dead in trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

[31 : 30] But God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved and raised up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

For by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Before I give my testimony, I think, could we sing together from Mission Praise number 673. Mission Praise number 673.

[32 : 39] There is our Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son, precious Lamb of God Messiah, Holy, Holy One. Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son and leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

Let's sing this to God's praise. name of God, Jesus, God's own Son, precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.

Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son, and leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names, precious Lamb of God, name above all names, precious Lamb of God, Messiah, O for sinners' name.

Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son, and leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

[34 : 39] Amen. Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son, and leaving your Son, and leaving your Son. When I stand in glory, I will see His face.

And there will serve my King forever in that holy place.

Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son, and leading your Spirit till the work on earth is done.

Amen. That this will make a huge difference in other people's lives, because you are working in each one of us.

You want each one of us to come to know the Lord Jesus. And I pray, Lord, that everything that I say will be to your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, it's great to be here tonight.

[36 : 20] It's good to see you all, and those who are online. I just want to start, really, by saying that I was born in Dublin, in Ireland.

I don't know if any of you have been to Dublin, but I was born in a suburb of Dublin, in South Dublin. I was the youngest child of a family of five children.

I grew up in a very secure and loving family. I was very blessed, I think. It was a secure and a happy time.

There had been a great tragedy in our family. My parents had been out in Zambia, which is in Africa. Before I was born, they had their third child by the name of Michael, and he was drowned in a swimming pool at the age of four.

So they'd gone through this terrible tragedy. But my mum had a strong Christian faith. And looking back, I'm amazed.

[37 : 30] I still feel amazed at how her faith carried her through that. And that she was quite certain that Michael was with the Lord Jesus.

That was not just something she conjured up. It was an absolute certainty. And that stuck with me and still does, actually. I went to church.

It was rather a sort of low-key Anglican Church of Ireland church. The gospel was there. We had a lot of readings of the scripture.

But it was, I have to say, it was rather diluted gospel. Well-meaning, but rather dry. But I went to Sunday school. And that was important.

I learned about Jesus. And it's great that the young people are here today as well. And that had an effect on me. I know that I didn't come to faith then.

[38 : 30] But that teaching, however basic it was, is really important. So hold on to what you're learning in Sunday school. It's something that will carry you through. My mother prayed often at bedtime with me.

She gave me some Bible notes to read. These things were really important later on. When I look back, I know I drifted, as you're going to find out. But these things were important.

I went to boarding school. At the age of 12, I was sent to a boarding school in the north of Ireland. And this was very tough, actually. It was sudden wrenching from home.

And I was very homesick. However, I managed to go through five years there. In fact, I ended up liking it. I went to what's called confirmation, which in the Anglican Church is a sort of confirming of your faith, which happens when you're about 12 or 13.

You go through various lessons about the faith. And then a bishop comes and you have a big ceremony and he lays hands on you and you say that you believe.

[39 : 42] Now, I went through all of this. And it's interesting that although I was sort of sincere, I didn't understand any of it. I think I was spiritually completely blind.

I just went through a process. Now, that's not always the case with people who are confirmed, so don't get me wrong. But certainly it was with me. And I began to doubt.

I loved science. And I began to think, well, science actually tells me that you don't need God. Look at biology.

Look at evolution. I began to think there's actually no rational reason why I should believe in a creator. And I became rather proud of my knowledge of science.

So I went to university. I got into medical school by the skin of my teeth. But I got there. I used to meet some Christians there.

[40 : 42] And I used to like discussing things with them. But I was rather proudly saying why I couldn't believe because of this, that, and the other science and philosophy.

I admired them. But basically, underneath all of this, I didn't know what I believed. I dabbled in Eastern religions and ideas.

I suppose I was searching in some sort of fashion. So I carried on with medicine. But to be honest with you, I was far more interested in climbing and mountaineering.

And every spare moment, certainly every weekend, I would be rock climbing. I went to Ireland, Scotland, the Alps, and once to the Himalayas, which I look back on with great pleasure.

But it became almost an obsession with me. I met Christian on one of those trips to Scotland in winter climbing. And in fact, we were, if you like, an item for a while.

[41 : 46] But this ended quite soon. Probably just as well. Because I was immature and completely mixed up emotionally and spiritually when I look back on it.

I had one experience that I'll always remember. We were on a climb called the North Face of the Eiger with my friend.

And we were halfway up this. And we spent a night on a ledge there, very uncomfortable. And we'd been planning this for months. We'd really geared up, heated up for getting up to the top of this thing.

But the weather started to get really threatening. It was a very dangerous place. There were bad stone fall. And despite the fact that we were desperate to get up this thing, we'd been planning for months to do it, I felt this incredibly strong feeling.

And I actually knew it was God. I wasn't a Christian. I knew it was God saying, looking down into the valley below us. And I was quite certain that he was saying, I have something more for you.

[42 : 55] Don't just throw your life away. I have something more for you. I didn't actually say that I'd had an experience of God to my friend. I just said, I think we ought to go down.

And he agreed. So we got down. And I sort of forgot about that later. But that was an important thing. I mean, God works in us before we come to Christ.

And he may be working in people who are listening tonight. He's working. He's drawing you to him, which is what he wants to do. I qualified.

I volunteered to work in a hospital in Kenya. And I worked there for three years. It was actually run by some Irish Catholic nuns. It was in a beautiful remote area.

There were other volunteers there that I got to know. And it was really hard going. It was a busy hospital. It was over 100 beds. And often I'd be the only doctor there for weeks.

[43 : 57] And there were, you know, some beds had three kids to each bed. It was, there were extreme cases, very late presentations of people, a lot of death, unnecessary death amongst the local population.

And I was often alone. And I began at that point to cry out to God. I said, if you're there, help. And I realized more and more my own weaknesses.

God was working on me, obviously. And my unworthiness in this situation. And we sang Psalm 40 there. He inclined to me and heard my cry.

If you cry out to God, he will hear you. He will incline his ear to you. And he will hear you. There was a Ugandan doctor there, a Christian, who came to help us.

And he, one night, he came along and he witnessed to me. He just came purely to talk to me about his faith. And he gave me a tract. And he prayed. And I really appreciated that.

[45 : 06] It didn't seem to make any difference to me, quite honestly. But here was somebody who went out of his way to tell me about his faith. What a wonderful thing to do.

It took a lot of him to do that. And, of course, this was a link in the chain of bringing me to Christ. Of course, my mother was praying. So we should never underestimate the value of prayer and saying a few words to somebody about your faith.

One day, I was on my own in the house. And I picked up a Bible. I actually got the Bible when I was confirmed. It was a New Testament Bible. It was quite a good translation.

And it was covered in dust because I hadn't touched it for years. But I thought, I'll pick it up. I'll just give it a go. So I began reading the Gospel of Matthew.

And I came to the Sermon on the Mount, chapter 5. And there was something about the purity and the holiness of this teaching that absolutely gripped me.

[46 : 16] I was gripped. And I felt something I'd never felt before. And that was Jesus right there with me, present with me, speaking to me. His love, his beauty, it's indescribable.

These sort of spiritual experiences, I'm sure many of you have had them. It's not easy to put into words. It was falling in love, if you like. His love enveloped me.

Above all, there's his certainty that he was with me. All my clever arguments meant nothing, nothing at all.

This was real. And if someone had asked me how now was he Lord, I would have said, of course, he's Lord now. But I carried on being a bit skeptical.

I thought, I'll wake up the next morning and I'll be just the same old skeptic. But I woke up and he had not gone away. He was the same. Not left me.

[47 : 21] And you see, it's all grace. It's all grace. Undeserved free grace. That's what it's all about. I didn't deserve it.

He came to me. He drew me. And that verse in verse 8 that we read in Ephesians, it is by grace you've been saved. Through faith. And it is not of your own doing.

It is the gift of God. It's a free gift. I didn't earn it. I didn't deserve it. We don't get this by trying to impress God. It's just gloriously free.

Now, in this short passage that we've just read in Ephesians, Paul actually mentions grace three times. I don't know if you noticed. But I didn't know that until I started to look at it today.

He says in verse 5, by grace you've been saved. Verse 7, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus.

[48 : 19] And then in verse 8, for it is by grace you've been saved again, he says. All my proud arguments vanished. My intellectual doubts vanished.

That's a miracle, really, considering what I had been through. And I realize now that I had to come as a child. And Jesus says this, doesn't he? Anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.

Nor did I have any theological understanding. You remember that I didn't have gospel teaching in the church that I'd been to. And I was dead. I wasn't listening properly.

I didn't have any theological understanding. And I think this is very important to some people. It's only later, in fact, that I fully understood, as much as one can, how Jesus took my sins and our sins upon himself on the cross.

The question is, do you need to understand everything about theology and how Jesus took your sins? And the answer is no. You don't. He can save you.

[49 : 32] And then you can come to know more about how he saved you later. So don't, if anyone's listening to this who feels they're just ignorant and don't know enough of the Bible, that is not a hindrance.

I was, to be honest with you, you kids here knew more about the gospel than I did when I became a Christian. Because you get good teaching.

It's only later I discovered. It's wonderful. It's because of his great love, verse 5, which he loved us. Even when we were dead in trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ. And this is another thing. Being dead in trespasses, which is what we just read, is not a barrier to faith.

We have to come as we are to him. I didn't suddenly change my life in order to come to him. He came to me while I was in that situation.

[50 : 32] So don't wait till you're a better person. I wasn't a better person. I was dead in trespasses. We come as we are to him.

And he's rich in mercy because of the great love which we read, which he loves us. It's all about his love, his mercy, and his grace.

And the definition of grace, as I'm sure you know, is it's undeserved and we cannot earn it. Well, I was so keen to tell other people about this.

I was welling up within me. And I did to a few of the hospital staff. I was pretty bashful about it. But I told a few people. I told one of the priests and he was very happy for me. They were good people. I eventually told my parents when I came home. And my brother John is just older than me. And John later became a Christian through other people helping him, which is a wonderful thing.

[51 : 32] Becoming a Christian is the start of a long journey. We are far from perfect. There are many pitfalls and the devil will lead you to them.

And spiritual warfare becomes real. But whose side would you rather be on? Jesus or the devil? And there's only one answer to that.

And as we depend more and more on him, as I've had to do, we realize that Jesus has all the power and authority over Satan. I love this verse from 1 John 3.8.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. The good verse for spiritual warfare. If you feel under attack. Now there are many times when we may feel that we've let God down, as I have.

And indeed have done time many times. You may go through periods of spiritual depression. But I love this verse in Philippians 1.6.

[52 : 39] He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It's his work. He's committed to you. So if you come to Christ, don't fear that he's going to leave you in the lurch.

He's committed to you. We may wander. He won't. Life sometimes brings sorrow and pain. I think we heard this in the sermon this morning.

We are not always cushioned from tragedy. And my parents certainly were not. And I know many of you have gone through such things. But stick with reading his word and praying.

And he'll carry you through these tests. He's for you always. Remember that verse in Romans 8.28. And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good.

For those who are called according to his purpose. I read only this morning that Corrie Ten Boom, when writing about her experiences in a concentration camp, said, When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off.

[53 : 56] You sit still and trust the engineer. Good advice. We sang from Psalm 40.

And this applies to when we first become a Christian. And it applies when we have gone into sin or let God down. We should cry out to him in confession. And I think that's another thing I would just recommend.

And I'm sure we've heard this many times. Daily confession, regular confession is the key. We read, I waited patiently for the Lord.

He inclined to me and heard my cry. And he always hears our cry for help. He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the Maori bog and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure.

And who is the rock? We've already heard that. The rock is Jesus. He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God.

[54 : 58] It's joyful. In the end, it's really joyful. Now, by miraculous means, which I can't go into, it's too long. He brought Christian and I together again after six years not seeing each other.

We went out to Tanzania as missionaries for some years. And while we were in language school learning Swahili, we were listening one night to a World Service radio program about Harris, the Isle of Harris.

We could hear all the garlic. We could hear the seagulls. We could see. We felt we were right there. And I couldn't sleep that night. And I had to get up in the middle of the night.

And I started to read the Bible. I started to pray. And I had this immensely overwhelming sense that one day we were going to work in Harris. It seemed ridiculous.

Because we'd only just gone to Tanzania. We were there for goodness knows how many years. I told a few people about this. And then I completely shelved it. Six years later, a nurse came to work with us at the hospital to help with Rwandan refugees in the crisis.

[56 : 15] They were coming over, flooding over into the district we were in. And we got to know her very well. She was from Scotland, from a remote part of Scotland. In fact, she was the daughter of Dr. Robertson, who'd been the GP here.

Shonad. And she suggested that I contact James Finderson. And when we were on leave, I spoke to him on the phone about going to general practice.

He gave me some nice advice. But cutting a long story short again, this is why we're here. But what an amazing thing that God had planned that in advance.

And he does that with us. He has plans for us. He has plans for our lives. And he brought us here. And we're very privileged to be here. This is a fantastic place and wonderful people.

I got a great job. Christian spent many years as a teacher. We are very blessed. He has plans for us. But we have to be patient.

[57 : 19] It took six years for me to understand anything about that particular plan. But nothing's random to God. Nothing's random. Verse 10 of our passage.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Now, one of the plans he had for me was to go back to those doubts about science and philosophy and to wrestle with them a bit more as a Christian. And I've been given the privilege of speaking and writing about science, how it confirms the reality of a creator God. Absolutely and fully confirms it.

So, as I finish tonight, why not allow God to work out his plan for your life? He knows everyone in this church tonight and anyone who may be listening online.

We need to come to know the Lord Jesus. And he's calling you. It's all about his love and us loving him back because of that love.

[58 : 33] Now, we're coming to the time of communion this next weekend. This is a time for those of us who are Christians to obey his command. Do this in remembrance of me.

It's a command. Not a, if you feel like it. Do this in remembrance of me. And it's a solemn, but it's also a joyful thing to remember his work on the cross for taking on himself the punishment for our sins.

What an amazing thing. And we're going to celebrate that and remember that this coming weekend. And if you're hesitating, if there's somebody here who's hesitating about that, and then I hope my small experience that I've related here of the incredible grace of God, completely undeserved, completely unearned, will help you to decide to follow Jesus and put your trust in him.

And you'll never regret it. Let's just pray. Lord, we just thank you that you are an amazing God, full of grace, full of truth, and that you have a plan for each one of us.

And we pray that each one of us will reach out to you. Thank you that you do incline your ear to us. You don't turn your back on us.

[60 : 05] If we'd call out to you. We pray for those who are uncertain and fearful and hesitant, Lord, that they don't need to be. You're there for them.

And that you call them. And it's just a wonderful relationship you want with them. We pray for this coming communion, Lord, that we will rejoice as we remember.

It's solemn, but we also rejoice in what you've done for us. And that those who are hesitating may come forward and profess their faith in the Lord Jesus.

Amen. We're going to have a last singing. It's from Mission Praise 746. What a friend we have in Jesus.

All our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry. Everything to God in prayer. He's our friend. We can bring everything to him.

[61 : 02] Sing this. What a privilege to carry.

Everything to God in prayer. Oh, what a privilege to carry.

We should never be discouraged. Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful? Who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness.

Take it to the Lord in prayer. Are we weak and heavy laden. Comfort with the Lord of care.

[62 : 48] Precious Savior, take it to the Lord in prayer. Do thy friends.

Do thy friends despise forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer. In his arms he'll take and shield thee.

Thou wilt find us all as there. Amen. Amen. And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

Amen. Amen.■